

More than 1 million veterans are unemployed ;
Both Republicans and Democrats have presented proposals to help veterans get hired

Bay Shore, NY – On Wednesday, Rep Steve Israel (D – Huntington) joined with veterans at a veteran-owned Long Island business to call for Congress to act immediately upon return to pass a bipartisan veterans jobs bill. More than 1 million veterans are currently unemployed and the jobless rate for post-9/11 veterans is 13.3%, more than 4% above the national unemployment rate.

“By the end of this year, as many as 56,000 of our troops will return from Iraq and Afghanistan. When they get here, the last place they should be sent is the unemployment line. We owe it to our veterans and service members to come together and immediately pass bipartisan legislation to get veterans jobs,” said Rep. Israel. “Both Democrats and Republicans have proposed plans that would offer businesses tax credits for hiring veterans. When both parties agree on something, it's time to quit talking about it and just pass it.”

Rep. Israel spoke at local veteran-owned business Precision Metals in Bay Shore, NY, which regularly hires veterans and recently returned from the National Veteran Small Business Conference and Expo.

President Barack Obama, Democratic Sen. Patty Murray (WA) and Rep. Sanford Bishop (GA) as well as several Republican Members of the U.S. House of Representatives, including Reps. Thaddeus McCotter (MI), Peter King (NY) and Jeff Miller (FL), have proposed legislation to encourage businesses to hire veterans. Rep. Israel urged a compromise on a bill that would include tax credits for businesses who hire veterans.

A June 2011 report from the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee ranked New York as the 10th worst state in the nation for unemployed post-9/11 veterans. The report highlighted how the May 2011 New York state unemployment rate was 7.9% but the unemployment rate in New York for 9/11 veterans was twice as high at 15.2%. More than one million service members are projected to leave the military between 2011 and 2016.

Rep. Israel has long advocated on behalf of Long Island veterans and has secured more than \$4.7 million in back payments for veterans in New York's Second Congressional District.